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# DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

## INFORMATION SERVICE

*Fishery  
market  
development  
program  
receives  
additional  
appropriation*

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

For Release SATURDAY, JULY 19, 1941.

Continuation of the program to develop and increase markets for fishery products of domestic origin during the coming year has been assured by allotment of an additional \$37,500 to the Division of Fishery Industries of the Fish and Wildlife Service, United States Department of the Interior.

Begun early in 1941, this program has sought to promote a free flow of fishery products from fishermen to consumers by improving retailing methods, encouraging greater emphasis on fish sales in retail stores, and calling the attention of consumers to the advantages of serving fish oftener, according to Ralph Russell, Associate Fishery Economist in immediate charge of this program for the Service.

"Considerable progress has been made in promoting the consumption of fishery products in Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, and Columbus since we initiated the market development program in these cities early in the year," says Russell. "Striking at the roots of the difficulties believed to restrict the consumption of fish, agents of the Service have been actively impressing on housewives the many advantages of fish as a food. They are calling the attention of retail grocers to existing inadequacies in handling and selling fish and making suggestions for improvement of this situation. Institutions, also,

have been encouraged to serve fish more frequently, through repeated contacts in person by agents especially trained in dietary technology."

In addition to appearing on special consumer-sponsored radio programs, agents prepare brief scripts which are broadcast several times weekly over radio stations in their respective cities and surrounding trade areas. These broadcasts include recommendations to consumers for "thrifty buys" on the local market and helpful information material--especially methods of preparing fish. Recommendations for purchases are always on the basis of up-to-the-minute market data on supplies and prices of available species.

Supplementing this service, home economics information is sent to the radio stations, for expansion into longer broadcasts.

"A constant effort has been made by the agents," Russell explains, "to coordinate materials going to housewives, so that various phases of the work form a concerted drive rather than operate at random or at cross purposes. For example, if smelt is recommended as a thrifty buy in a radio announcement, then recipes for cooking this species and interesting facts about this particular fish are prepared for use on the women's pages in newspapers."

The Service agents have also entered into the merchandising problems of retail stores. Store managers have, individually and in groups, had attention focused upon how retailing methods can be improved. Need for adequate refrigeration, clean and attractive displays, high quality merchandise, and on-the-spot advertising have all been emphasized.

"While the Service clearly recognizes that the problem of low fish consumption will require a consistent effort over a long period of time," states Russell, "it is encouraging to note that sales of fresh and frozen fishery

products have increased substantially during the current year in the cities where the agents have concentrated their efforts.

"While a general upward movement in most lines of business has been experienced as a result of the national defense effort, it is felt that the current market development program is responsible for at least a part of the increases in the fish business. It is hoped that when the additional personnel needed for the continuance of this program is obtained and the program develops more fully, even greater benefits will result from the new program."

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